

CAREGIVERS MEETING #4
October 20, 1999
9:00 A.M.-12 Noon
Room 705A, Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C.

I. Background and Expectations of “Agreed Upon Activities To Distribute Medicare Information To Caregivers”

Lis Handley, Director of the Partnership Development Group of the Center for Beneficiary Services, HCFA, reported that a subgroup of this Caregiver Group, composed of representatives of the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC), National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A), Social Security Administration (SSA), Employees Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), and the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) met shortly after the August 3, 1999 meeting of this group. The goal of that meeting was to develop a list of implementable activities, including products, that could be used to distribute Medicare information to caregivers. This compiled list was distributed with the announcement of this meeting for your review. It was hoped that our member organizations who have been attending these meetings would contribute to the development and distribution of these proposed products. Lis stated that we would review this list during the meeting and ascertain which organizations would volunteer and help develop certain products and/or help with distribution of these products.

Lis also reiterated that HCFA is gladly serving as the convener of these meetings and coming to the table as an equal participant in reaching out to caregivers. HCFA is looking for synergy among the participating organizations and is looking to others to take on leadership roles in pursuing efforts to educate caregivers about Medicare. Lis suggested that we revisit this topic at the next meeting.

II. Discussion of What Participating Organizations Can Do To Help Implement “Agreed Upon Activities”

1. Formulation of a list of no cost/low cost programs for caregivers at worksites to share with employers and other organizations.

Tom Pugh of SSA's Office of Human Resources distributed his five page draft list of no cost/low cost programs for addressing the caregiver needs of the workforce based on his many years of experience in this field at SSA. Sara Aravanis of the National Association of State Units On Aging (NASUA), Dorothy Howe of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), and Adrienne Dern of the

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) offered to work with Tom to improve the utility of the list by incorporating referrals to local resources where appropriate.

2. Share talking points/overheads on Medicare with the Employee Assistance Professionals Association and its local chapters.

HCFA staff will assess what is available regarding approved standardized talking points about Medicare (hard copy, disk, other) and bring those materials to the next meeting to share with EAPA and other member organizations.

3. Development of a health checklist with a Medicare message for caregivers.

Gail Hunt, Executive Director of NAC, shared her draft of “A Checklist of Important Annual Health Events for People Over 65” with the participants. This document had a list of questions prompting caregivers and beneficiaries to consider certain basic health events, such as getting a flu shot. Gail stated that the draft needed the addition of professional medical input to add statements of importance or certain parameters to each prompt. Staff of the Partnership Development Group will arrange a meeting including Gail, Dr. Barbara Paul of HCFA, Katherine Gordon a nurse with HCFA’s Office of Standards and Quality, and Rhonda DeJoice of the Partnership Development Group who was formerly with the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research and did extensive work with the medical community on communicating preventive health services to the public. In addition, after the draft has been revised and approved by the above group, HCFA graphics design staff will be consulted for their design of the document for distribution to beneficiaries via caregivers. Gail suggested that logos of the participating organizations helping to prepare this document should be placed on the document.

Participants suggested that this document should be accompanied by a list of the preventive services covered by Medicare. Dorothy Howe of AARP stated that she would ascertain if AARP had available funds for the printing of this document. The EAPA, AARP, the N4A, NASUA, and the Washington Business Group on Health (WBGH) were very interested in receiving this document for distribution to its members. Randi Baylis and Rowena Bonoan of WBGH were interested in putting this document in the WBGH newsletter to member employers’ Human Resources Departments. Randi and Rowena stated that WBGH was presently looking into Eldercare as a matter of importance for WBGH members.

Participants suggested that the document could be enhanced by adding a list of appropriate resources to it. In addition, N4A, AARP, EAPA, WBGH, and NASUA would like to put the finished product on their respective web sites.

4. Video on the Medicare Program for caregivers.

Tom Pugh of the SSA Office of Human Resources stated that SSA formerly conducted satellite broadcasts with guest speakers on topics of interest to SSA employees. The satellite used by SSA is no longer in operation so in an effort to continue communication with its employees SSA now develops a 30 minute video every 30 days on subjects of concern to their employees. In that tradition, and in view of this group's goal of reaching out to caregivers, SSA and HCFA have been working together to develop a video on the Medicare Program for SSA employees/caregivers and other caregivers. HCFA staff has developed the script of basic Medicare questions and answers for this video. SSA and HCFA employee/caregivers will be posing the questions in the video and a panel of HCFA staff experts will respond with the answers with the participation of a professional moderator, a former Baltimore TV newswoman, Rhonda Overby. The video is scheduled for completion on October 21. SSA will send copies of the video to the 75 SSA Area Directors around the country at SSA sites. SSA employees will be able to borrow the video or view it on site.

A copy of this video "Medicare From A Caregiver's Point of View" will be brought to the next meeting for viewing by the group. In addition, HCFA will be exploring the possibility of putting this video or portions of it on the Medicare web site (www.medicare.gov). HCFA is also planning on distributing copies of this video to the groups which have been participating in this series of caregiver meetings, as well as to the 125 HCFA National Medicare Education Program partners, beneficiary advocacy groups, local chapters of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association, libraries in cities of more than 25,000 population, state offices of the USDA Cooperative Extension Education Services, and other interested organizations. HCFA will also look into making this video available for order via the Internet.

5. Develop 10 basic Medicare questions and answers for EAPA web site using script from SSA video. Also investigate if possible to put SSA video on EAPA web site.

HCFA staff will prepare the 10 most frequently asked Medicare questions with their respective answers based on the video script and other sources for sharing with participating groups. HCFA staff will consult and verify with EAPA for posting these questions and answers on the EAPA web site as well as putting the SSA/HCFA video on the EAPA web site as they originally suggested.

Dorothy Howe of AARP stated that AARP is conducting focus groups with caregivers to determine how information is sought about Medicare and what are their frequently asked questions regarding Medicare.

6. Share EAPA local chapter list with HCFA ROs so they can collaborate to educate caregivers.

EAPA has provided a listing of the local EAPA chapters and their leading officers to HCFA. HCFA staff shared these local chapter listings with the HCFA Regional Offices. These listings were accompanied with a cover letter encouraging these HCFA entities to approach and partner with these local EAPA chapters to educate employees/caregivers about Medicare.

7. Approach the Office of Personnel Management to sponsor a half day meeting for Federal employees/caregivers and Federal Agency employee assistance/work life professionals on the basics of Medicare.

HCFA worked with OPM's Family-Friendly Workplace Advocacy Office to plan and conduct a joint initiative to educate Federal employees/caregivers and Federal employee assistance/work life professionals about Medicare in honor of November being "National Caregivers' Month". A session was held on November 4 from 9:30 A.M. to noon in the Hubert H. Humphrey Building in Washington, D.C. on "Understanding The Medicare Program". The information session was conducted by HCFA Central and Regional Office staff and the directors of four local State Health Information and Assistance programs. The session was attended by about 100 Federal employees/caregivers and Federal Agency employee assistance/work life professionals.

8. Write an article on basic Medicare and Medicare information resources for distribution to EAP professionals highlighting Medicare resources (www.medicare.gov, Medicare Toll Free Line, numerous publications) for employees to turn to when confronting a caregiver crisis.

This effort is in progress.

9. Exhibit on Medicare at EAPA National Conference October 21-24.

Due to funding and timing issues HCFA was not able to exhibit at the EAPA Conference.

10. HCFA educate work life professionals on Medicare at exhibit at National Conference of Work Life Professionals February 2000.

HCFA will have a registered exhibit at the National Conference of Work Life Professionals in February 2000.

11. Reach out to church groups.

This effort has not been initiated as yet pending development of products to be shared.

12. Explore partner opportunities with external EAP companies who operate EAPs under contract, i.e. Magellan, Seridian, PCC, VBH.

This effort has not been initiated as yet pending development of products to be shared.

13. AARP telephone survey of caregivers of Medicare beneficiaries regarding their interest in Medicare information to share with beneficiaries.

Dorothy Howe of AARP added this activity. She stated that AARP is conducting a telephone survey of caregivers of Medicare beneficiaries regarding their interest in Medicare information to share with beneficiaries. She commented that the survey will be field tested in mid to late October with results expected to be available in mid-November.

III. Discussion of Leadership of Caregiver Group

No organization volunteered to become the convener of these caregiving meetings in response to Lis Handley's offer to pass the leadership responsibility to another group. It was noted that HCFA's participation was important in guaranteeing the involvement of other Federal agencies as well as other organizations. Lis pointed out that HCFA would stay involved as an equal partner in reaching out to caregivers, but would prefer to have another organization be the convener of these meetings.

Lis stated that the group has made a substantial contribution to the development, implementation, and distribution of specific products for caregivers by making specific commitments at this meeting.

Lis announced that the group will meet again in January to review specific products including a viewing of the SSA/HCFA video for caregivers. She also stated that since no group has volunteered to assume the role of convener of these meetings HCFA would continue to serve as the convener of these meetings.

IV. Viewing of Caregiver Video Developed By the National Association of Agencies on Aging

Adrienne Dern of N4A stated that the N4A caregiver video described programs that can help take care of older adults. The video “There’s No Place Like Home: Promoting Independence for Older Adults” shows how area agencies on aging help navigate services and resources for elders. The video has been distributed to 400 area agencies on aging. The video can be ordered by contacting Adrienne at 202-296-8130, or e-mail at adern@n4a.org. The cost of the video is \$35 for N4A members and \$50 for non-members.